

# Are You Really Hungry?



There are many judgments placed on food and eating habits. We often label foods as good or bad. Diets tend to moralize foods and disconnect you from your body's internal feelings of hunger and fullness. Many things in the past could have led to you being unable to recognize when you are hungry, full, or in need of emotional support.

Eating because you experience physical hunger is listening to your body's internal cues. You are less likely to overeat if you listen to and respond to internal cues (hunger and fullness) rather than external cues (sight or smell of food, stress or boredom).

**Action Tip:** Become more aware of what hunger and fullness feels like. Think about what it means to be truly hungry. What does it feel like for you? Do you ever let yourself get hungry?

**When you get hungry, which of these apply to you?**

- My stomach growls.
- I feel weak, dizzy, or light-headed.
- I get a headache.
- I don't know; I never let myself get hungry.

**When you eat, which of these apply to you?**

- I'm comfortable, not too full, not too empty

- I'm stuffed to the point of feeling sick.
- You're starting to think about your next meal or snack.

**Action Tip:** Aim to stop eating when you are comfortably full, satisfied. If you continue to eat it is probably because your head wants more, but your body has had enough.

**Action Tip:** Keep track of your eating pattern for at least 3 day to see how much you are eating and if you are eating because of hunger or other reasons. Each day write down what you ate and the amount and note how you felt at the time. For example, were you bored, stressed, or truly hungry?

At the end of the week, review your eating pattern. Are you eating according to the [Choose My Plate guidelines](#) ? Are you eating because of hunger or other reasons? From here, set goals and an action plan to improve your eating habits.

**Source:** Adapted from a resource produced by the City of Hamilton Public Health Services. Distributed by CoreHealth Technologies